

# Media Representations of Male and Female 'Co-Offending': How female offenders are portrayed in comparison to their male counterparts

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## Abstract

Through the method of Critical Discourse Analysis this dissertation examined how female co-offenders are portrayed in comparison to their male counterparts within different forms of media. Existing literature on gender assumptions and the notions of masculinity and femininity and how they are reiterated in relation to the offender within the media sphere, were vital in not only providing the foundations for this dissertation but also the focus for the analysis. Concentrating on two different cases of male and female co-offending; Vanessa George and Colin Blanchard and Maxine Carr and Ian Huntley, a review of the literature relating to each of the partnerships was initially undertaken before critically analysing the linguistic features of a selection of headlines and two documentaries relating to each of the cases. Informed by the literature, due to the preconceptions surrounding femininity it was predicted that within both forms of media the female offender in each case would receive the majority of the negative attention and due to their gender would be demonised far more than the male. Whilst the analyses of both sets of headlines revealed this to be true, interestingly the documentary relating to Maxine Carr appeared to take on a far more balanced stance.

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## 1. Introduction

The main area of focus within this dissertation is gender expectations and how they are both featured in, and reinforced by media portrayals of male and female offenders involved in the same crime. In order to examine this relationship two forms of media will be explored; the first newspapers and the second documentaries. The role of the media in reinforcing and influencing the public's perceptions of crime is an essential area of criminological investigation and it is therefore a suitable avenue of study. The introduction aims to introduce the key themes which will be focussed upon within the study as well as providing an overview of the various chapters.

The issue of gender and the disparities it brings in relation to crime is one that has undergone intensive research over recent years, a progression which is often said to coincide with the development of women's rights and supposed equality with men (Tracy, Kempf-Leonard & Abramske-James, 2009). With this, although it can be said that enhancements have been made in all aspects of the female sphere and indeed within the criminological literature, it is often suggested that the universal subordination of women through the regurgitation of traditional views does in fact still remain extremely prominent within all forms of social and economic arrangements (Tracy, Kempf-Leonard & Abramske-James, 2009). Considering this, one institution of great interest within this study is the media. Although argued it often resorts 'too readily to gender stereotyping' (Schneider & Kitchen, 2007, p.6), for many such practices act in a way to provide a vital source of both news and entertainment with which crime is often a leading topic (Potter, 2010).

Although frequently 'hidden' or 'taken-for-granted', it is argued that the categorising of gender roles based on patriarchal norms relating to femininity and masculinity continue to hold prevalence within media portrayals of criminality (Meloy & Miller, 2009, p.220). Generalisations such as 'men are rational' and 'women are irrational' or 'men are aggressive' and 'women are passive' effectively undermine the 'multiplicity' of gender and remain to be a common feature within the conventions of wider society (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003, p.47). Coupled with this female offenders are continually subjected to and judged against the 'ideal woman' often perceived as an unobtainable image of femininity marked as 'docile', 'maternal' and most of all 'obedient' (Snider, 2003, p.355). As a result Lloyd (1995) argues that female offenders are often regarded as 'doubly deviant' as not only do they break the law in its practical sense but also they go against those rules which mark womanhood (as cited in Snider, 2003, p.355).

Whilst there is an abundance of research surrounding the portrayal of both male and female offending within the media, there appears to be a lack of direct comparisons between those men and women who come under the umbrella of co-deviants partaking in criminal activity together (Bexson, 2011). Taking this as a rationale, in order to highlight and readdress the issue of how female criminality is represented this research aims to examine the way in which the cases involving Maxine Carr and Ian Huntley and Vanessa George and Colin Blanchard were portrayed within a selection of newspapers and documentaries. Whilst it can be argued that Maxine Carr is not a true representation of an active female co-offender as she did not in fact partake in the crimes of her partner, the way in which the media constructed her at the time means that her and Ian Huntley were judged as co-offenders therefore justifying the inclusion of them within this study. With this, more often than not the way in which female criminality is both depicted and described varies considerably to that of male criminality (Meloy & Miller, 2009). This study therefore will pay close attention to the way in which each of the chosen forms of media represents male and female offenders and how social expectations can be discerned within these representations. The extent to which gendered social expectations of men and women are reinforced in media reports including newspapers and documentaries will be critically evaluated.

Whilst this study will have a predominant focus on how female offenders are depicted within the media sphere, it is important to acknowledge that both men and women participating in criminal activity often fall victim to gender assumptions and stereotyping (Walklate, 2004). In accordance to men's criminality, discussed in the next chapter, and often to the neglect of female offending much of

the classical debate around crime has centered on trying to understand what it is that drives certain males to break the law and commit criminal acts (Klein, 2010). Early emphasis placed on the biological characteristics of the male offender along with the fact that statistically men commit more crime than women is often suggested problematic in itself for how society perceives both men and women who participate in criminal activity (Siegel, 2011). Ultimately in stressing the male offender the literature has almost depicted such behaviour as the norm to the point in which society should almost accept it whereas the female offender instils complete shock into the public ultimately making them more newsworthy and impacting to some effect on how society perceives them (Carter, 1998). With the above discussion in mind the key research questions for this study are:

1. What role does gender play in the way offenders are represented in media?
2. Looking at representations of two case studies involving male and female offenders in newspapers, what gender expectations of men and women are reinforced?
3. Looking at representations of the two case studies involving male and female offenders in documentary format, what gender expectations of men and women are reinforced?
4. What conclusions can be drawn from such representations?
5. Do any of the representations pose any challenges to the notion of gender expectations?

### Overview of Chapters

In order to conduct the study and address each of the research questions fully, an initial exploration must be undertaken into the way in which offending in general is represented within today's media. Forming the basis of chapter one, it is important to consider how male and female offenders are depicted individually before going on to discuss exclusively the portrayal of co-offending by different forms of media. Within this initial chapter concepts of masculinity and femininity and how they are reproduced within the media sphere will be discussed in relation to offending in greater detail. From this, both chapter two and then chapter three will go on to look specifically into the existing academic research surrounding media portrayals of the two cases which will be used for analysis. Chapter two will focus specifically on the case involving Vanessa George and Colin Blanchard, and chapter three will consider the incident concerning Maxine Carr and Ian Huntley. By doing a number of comprehensive literature reviews any disparities or inequalities of particular prominence can be highlighted and used as guide for when carrying out the critical discourse analysis, the method of which will be discussed in the fourth chapter. For each of the cases the findings of the analyses from each of the different forms of media will be critically discussed in reference to the research questions. From this, conclusions from the study surrounding both its findings and effectiveness will be drawn noting how the research can be taken further. With this, the following chapter will discuss how the media represents male and female offending.

### 2. Media Representations of male and female offending

It is widely acknowledged that the topic of crime and the debates surrounding it have aroused public interest throughout history resulting in its increased sense of newsworthiness and heightened attention from the media (Marsh & Melville, 2009). Although to varying degrees, the media has become an important aspect within criminological literature as it often serves as a platform from which many argue is a key element in the shaping of public attitudes and opinions around criminal activity and offenders (Greer, 2007). With this Gerbner (1995) argues that although the media itself cannot be held accountable as a cause of crime, it is however responsible for the 'exaggerated' sense of 'public alarm' surrounding law and order' and thus the increasing of support for 'repressive solutions' (as cited by Reiner, 2006, p.302). In highlighting how powerful media discourses surrounding male and female criminality can be in both influencing public attitudes as well as directing government action it stresses the need for continued research in this area especially in relation to the disparities evident in how male and female offenders are portrayed and the impact this has (Zilney & Zilney, 2009).

Although there is a vast amount of literature surrounding the media and its portrayal of offenders, as noted, it is an area of research which is in need of constant development. One area of academic study which is lacking however is research into the relationship between male and female co-offenders and how they are perceived in today's media (Jones, 2008). As much of the literature agrees the way in which such individuals are both portrayed and as a result judged by society varies a great deal on the basis of gender within all forms of media (Marsh & Melville, 2009). Considering this, previous research recognises and places a great deal of emphasis on the notion of stereotyping and the implications relating to the reproduction of particular gender assumptions associated with the concepts of masculinity and femininity (Herrington & Nee, 2005). According to Rayner, Wall & Kruger (2001), the use of stereotypes in the media provide a 'short-cut' with which a lot of complex information can in fact be simplified to produce a 'character who not only is easily recognised but also is simple to deal with' (p.69).

As the foundations for gender stereotyping, social norms surrounding the roles and expectations of men and women are extremely pertinent in the way in which the media depicts both male and female offenders (Marsh et al, 2006). Although constructed around the biological concept of 'sex', gender roles and the expectations which they incur are in fact socially acquired in a way which enables them to be 'legitimated and perpetuated by values and beliefs embodied in societal institutions and social structures' (Brennan, 2002, as cited in Brennan & Vandenberg, 2009, p.144). As Brennan and Vandenberg (2009) note, women are not considered probable criminals and as a result the way in which they are perceived and the gender expectations to which they are judged by are somewhat different to that of the male. Taking note of Lloyd's (1995) theory '*Doubly Deviant, Doubly Damned*' she pronounces that female offenders are in fact judged and treated far more harshly for their crimes than men as not only have they broken the law in the legal sense but their criminality also signals a transgression from the norms of womanhood (as cited in Marsh et al, 2006). This is a notion which is considered highly prevalent within media portrayals of female offenders and is often said to sanction harsher punishments and sentences (Reiner, 2006).

In contrast for male offenders the notion of masculinity and the typical characteristics which are associated with it, for example, 'aggression and dominance' are often considered at the root of how they are portrayed and the explanations given for their behaviour (Herrington & Nee, 2005, p. 4). Advocates of this argument propose that the particular traits associated with being male ultimately increase a person's inclination to participate in criminal behaviour (Herrington & Nee, 2005). With this and as noted by Marsh & Melville (2009) 'the stereotypical picture of the criminal is of a young male' and undoubtedly it is one which is not only reinforced by much of the literature but also by the majority government statistics surrounding criminality (p.76). With this, Van Schie (1989) highlights that the 'stereotypes about criminal behaviour' are 'very pronounced and predominantly masculine' and therefore society's response to male and female offenders differs significantly (as cited in Brennan & Vandenberg, 2009, p.332).

It could be supposed therefore that if men commit the majority of the crime then the coverage a female offender receives should be at a minimum, however this does not appear to be the case as it is argued that they do in fact account for 'one third of violent crime stories in the media' (Marsh & Melville, 2009, p.77). Considering this, many argue that the supposed 'newsworthy' nature of female offending is one which is 'likely to capture the public's imagination' as such behaviour not only breaks the law in the legal sense but also goes against the socially constructed norms of society to which it is said both men and women feel pressure to conform to (Jones, 2008, p.148). Considering this in conjunction with the portrayal of male and female co-deviants, as noted by Marsh and Melville (2009), the existing perceptions surrounding the female means within such a pairing it is the women participant who not only receives the majority of the media glare but also the resulting condemnation. With this the following chapter will focus specifically on media representations of Vanessa George and Colin Blanchard.

3. Media Representations of Vanessa George and Colin Blanchard: How active female co-offenders are perceived in comparison to their male counterpart.

The case involving Vanessa George and Colin Blanchard was one that catapulted the notion of female offending and the panic surrounding it straight back into the public spotlight (Bexson, 2010). Before carrying out the analysis regarding the media portrayal of George and Blanchard it is important to firstly in this chapter to consider the existing research and literature surrounding this case. At midnight on Monday 8 June 2009, two days after the arrest of Colin Blanchard, mother of two and nursery worker Vanessa George was taken into custody on the suspicion of possessing indecent images of children (www.bbc.co.uk, 2010). From this, both Blanchard and George along with a second female co-offender Angela Allen, went on to be charged and convicted of an array of offences including sexual assault and making, possessing and distributing indecent images of children (BBC, 2010). Although all three individuals were found guilty of similar offences the media attention which each offender received and subsequently the way in which they were portrayed at the time differed immensely with much of the emphasis placed on George (Bexson, 2010). This is primarily demonstrated by the fact that whilst Blanchard was the first to be arrested it was not until George was taken into custody that the case hit the headlines (www.bbc.co.uk, 2010). For this reason this study will have a predominant focus on how the media represented George and Blanchard themselves during this time as well the offences they committed.

Whilst specific academic literature relating directly to this case is fairly limited, most likely because it is one which has occurred relatively recently, many of the studies which have been done in this area are conscious of the fact that there are severe discrepancies in the way each individual was represented in media at the time (Bexson, 2010; Lee, 2011). Considering this, many of the themes and theories already mentioned within this study are considered of great significance when looking at different portrayals of George and Blanchard and the response the crimes of these individuals ultimately evoked from the general public. Lloyd's work (1995) entitled *Doubly Deviant, Doubly Damned* and the continued presence of social norms and gender expectations within society are argued to be of particular importance when attempting to explain the disparities present (Duncan, 2010).

Women have traditionally and continue to fulfil a number of caretaking roles to children 'as parents, teachers, nurses and youth workers' (Duncan, 2010, p.7). With this women are more likely to be viewed as the gender that is 'protective' of children rather than 'exploitative' of them (Duncan, 2010, p.4). Many argue that these common sense assumptions derived from historical constructions surrounding gender norms not only play a key role in the demonization of female offenders within modern media, but also have resulted in fewer safeguards being put in place to protect children, something particularly evident within the case of George (Duncan, 2010). With this Duncan (2010) argues, existing expectations combined with a general lack of knowledge about female sex offenders has ultimately resulted in 'easy access' to children without appropriate 'supervision and oversight' (p.4). It is the emphasis placed upon the need for women to fulfil these roles which Stevenson (2008) argues increases the 'condemnation heaped upon' those 'fallen' women who fail to meet such expectations within the media, and within society, to the extent that it is far greater than that experienced by a male who has committed the same crime(p.148).

Being a nursery worker as well as a mother, George is a prime example of a woman who is perceived as 'doubly deviant' as not only has she broken the law in its legal sense but also those social laws constructed around gendered norms (Jones, 2008, p.148). Many believe that it is George's betrayal and violation of these traditional stereotypical roles 'in particular' as well as the legal laws in place which justifies the extensive media coverage she received in comparison to her male co-offender Colin Blanchard (Duncan, 2010, p.7). Although, as highlighted by the literature, male co-offenders like Blanchard are also subject to harsh scrutiny within the media many argue that such attention remains to be less severe than that given to the female counterpart (Rowbotham, 2008). Despite individuals like Blanchard often being described as 'evil or twisted in their child abuse', Rowbotham (2008, p.115) argues that the very notion of masculinity can act by way of an excuse. Whereas

femininity appears to ultimately 'enhance outrage', 'masculine instincts' on the other hand are considered to 'explain, if not justify' such behaviour' (Rowbotham, 2008, p.115).

According to Greer (2011), until fairly recently media representations of traditional stereotypes and gender roles have in effect falsely reassured society that 'ordinary' people and especially women do not commit sex offences (Stevenson, 2008, p.122). However the increased sense of newsworthiness attached to female offenders, especially those involved in violent or sexual crimes for example Myra Hindley and Rose West has in effect propelled individuals like that of Vanessa George to the forefront of media attention. As a result, Stevenson (2008) argues that contemporary media coverage especially within the English press has in fact 'effectively destroyed such fragile, albeit illusory, security' that women are incapable of such acts (p.112). Considering this idea of society's false sense of security and the media's possible motive to remove this, as highlighted by the literature, continual references are made to George's life as a 'law-abiding child care worker' before she committed the crime (Clarkson, 2011, p.6). Stevenson (2008) argues, that the way in which different forms of media has in fact represented female offenders like George has ultimately resulted in a shift in public fears from 'the male stranger waiting at the school gates' to those women entrusted with the care of children (p.112).

In addition to a female co-offender's actions being judged more harshly within the media than the males the relevant literature also raises concerns surrounding how George's physical appearance was portrayed at the time (Lee, 2011). Although an offender's aesthetics are undeniably irrelevant to their actions, it is argued that female perpetrators of crime are depicted as either 'treacherously beautiful or hideously repulsive' (Lee, 2011, p.xxvii). According to Lee (2011) in the case of George and Blanchard the nursery worker was 'habitually referred to as 18 stone Vanessa George', as if to emphasise a sense of abnormality and distance her from the stereotypical features associated with being a female (p.xxvii). The presumptions surrounding what it is to be a woman and how these relate to female perpetrators of crime can be seen to be reflected in the work of Lombroso and Ferrero (1895) who argue that a woman who behaves in a cruel way is perceived as 'betraying her nature' and in a sense is essentially more male than female (as cited in Lee, 2011, p.xxvii). As noted in the early literature 'rarely is a woman wicked but when she is she surpasses the male', from this it is obvious that past prejudices and stereotypes inherent within history still remain to have prevalence within today's society to the extent that the criminal activity of a female is considered far worse than that of a male (Lombroso & Ferrero, 1985 as cited in Lee, 2011, p.xxvii). Following this, the next chapter will go on to critically explore media representations of Maxine Carr and Ian Huntley. However whereas this chapter documents the media treatment of an active female co-offender the chapter will convey the media treatment of a passive female co-offender.

#### 4. Media Representations of Maxine Carr and Ian Huntley: How passive female co-offenders are portrayed in comparison to their male counterpart.

The case involving Maxine Carr and Ian Huntley and the death of two Soham schoolgirls, Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman in 2002, is one that has attracted intense public attention and media scrutiny since the initial coverage of the girl's disappearance began (O'Brien & Yar, 2008). It sparked the media to not only become 'heavily embroiled' in the initial search for the children but also their killers with both Huntley and Carr a prominent feature of the case from the outset (Wykes & Welsh, 2009, p.20). For the purpose of the study, it is important before analysing the two chosen forms of media relating to this case that research into the relevant academic literature surrounding the representations of Carr and Huntley is undertaken. Taking note of themes and concepts which have already been highlighted for example, 'Doubly Deviant, Doubly Damned' and the continued presence of gender expectations within society, it is vital that these be explored amongst other issues including the construction of Carr as an accomplice with direct reference to the case.

Unsurprisingly, and as demonstrated specifically by the Soham case, crimes involving offences such as murder or sexual abuse towards children evoke a harsh and punitive response from both the mass

[www.internetjournalofcriminology.com](http://www.internetjournalofcriminology.com)

media and the general public (Marsh & Melville, 2009). With this, as argued by Marsh and Melville (2009), in relation to those incidents involving male and female co-offending the majority of the attention is 'always focussed' on the woman participant no matter how significant her involvement in the crime actually is (p.119). This concept is hugely prevalent in relation to Carr as despite having no participation in the kidnap or murder of the two girls the negative media attention awarded to her 'has been and continues to be relentless' (Marsh & Melville, 2009, p.119). Although initially charged with two counts of assisting an offender, Carr was in fact cleared of these offences and was instead convicted of arguably the far less serious crime of conspiring to pervert the course of justice (Jones & Wardle, 2010). From this it is argued by Jones and Wardle (2010) that the public's hatred for Carr has in fact in a sense 'been both extreme and transparent' as such action 'would not usually merit such fierce public feeling' (p.53).

With much of the media coverage focussed upon the 'unthinkable idea' that a woman could be in some way involved in an act of violence or abuse towards a child (Marsh & Melville, 2009, p.119), it becomes increasingly apparent that the media's portrayal of the case 'told a very different story' to that which established the basis of Carr's sentence (Jones & Wardle, 2008, p.54). From the instant Carr was first implicated in the murders of the two girls it is often argued that the tabloid press deliberately sought to 'build her up into a national hate figure' to which many would argue they did in fact succeed (Crook, 2010, p.292). In a study conducted by Jones and Wardle (2008), they found that a number of the newspapers reporting on the case did in fact format their accounts in a way which 'could only encourage readers to draw misleading conclusions' relating to Carr's actual involvement in the murders (p.53). From this Knowles (2004) argues that through her association to Huntley and his crimes, the media were able to portray Carr in a way which meant her genuine role in the offence was in fact obscured.

As noted previously, female criminality has been and continues to be a considerably newsworthy topic (Weatherby, Blanch & Jones, 2008). Through the portrayal of Carr and Huntley as equals it successfully encouraged the misconception amongst the public that her crime was of equal severity to his (Jones & Wardle, 2010, p.53). Whilst it is argued that there are a number of factors which could have aided the increasingly negative portrayal of Carr in the media, it is her gender and the common sense assumptions which go along with it that has been put forward as the most prominent (Jones & Wardle, 2008). With reference to Lloyd's (1995) study, O'Brien and Yar (2008) note that 'opprobrium' heaped upon the female co-offender is a direct result of the perception that not only have they broken the law in the criminal sense but 'they have also deviated from their natural womanly roles' characteristic of the patriarchal society (p.81). In this sense it is argued that the media's exaggerated portrayal of Carr's culpability in this case does in fact demonstrate the 'institutionalised misogyny of journalists directed at any women who transgresses the conventions of femininity' (Wykes & Welsh, 2009, p.23).

Jewkes (2004) notes that women like Carr who are some way 'involved or implicated in a very serious crime' are frequently 'punished symbolically' by the press (p.114). Considering this, through the media's false construction of Carr as an 'accomplice' to Huntley (Jones & Wardle, 2010, p.53), she is placed into the unforgiving category of the 'fallen woman' characterised by individuals like Rosemary West and Myra Hindley (Marsh & Melville, 2009, p.119). Considered 'the most entrenched template for representing female offenders' (Jones & Wardle, 2010, p.59), similarly to Hindley and West, Maxine Carr is often portrayed as an 'inhumane monster' (Edwards, 2006, p.60). Whilst it is argued by Simpson and Mayr (2010) that the condemnation of Huntley in this case is to be expected, in contrast the vilification of Carr through association appears to be somewhat unjustified.

Although there is no doubt that Carr's choice to withhold information from the police and provide her guilty partner Ian Huntley with a false alibi is criminal and thus cannot be ignored, it is argued by Wykes & Welsh (2009) that in the end Carr's lies did in fact do very 'little damage' to the investigation process (p.23). For her crime, Maxine Carr received a three and a half year custodial sentence and was granted indefinite anonymity on her release due to the increased fear for her safety often suggested to be a direct result of the harsh media focus (Welsh, Greenwood & Banks, 2007).

Whilst it can be argued that Carr and Huntley are not a true representation of male and female co-offending as they did not in fact act together, through the media's portrayal of the two as equals they are systematically judged in the light of being co-deviants (Jones & Wardle, 2010, p.63). With this, Jones and Wardle (2009) argue that the 'mythical narrative' attached to couples who commit a crime together does in fact double the capacity for 'journalistic titillation', something which appears to feature heavily in the tabloid coverage of this case (p.63). Before a primary analysis of the different forms of media is undertaken, the next chapter will go on to explain the research method of critical discourse analysis which will be utilised for this investigation.

## 5. Methods

In this study, the method of a critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Simpson & Mayr, 2010, p53) has been chosen in order to investigate the concept of gender expectations within media portrayals of male and female co-offending. This form of analysis will be used as an interpretative framework to examine the ways in which dominant beliefs surrounding male and female criminality are portrayed in both documentary format and in the headlines of print newspaper reports. According to Van Dijk (2003) CDA has a primary focus on the way 'dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted' by oral and written communication in the 'social and political context' (p.352). Consequently, with much of the literature suggesting that the media's vilification of women who offend is a direct result of patriarchal preconceived notions surrounding femininity, this method of analysis appears most suitable in attempting to address the key research questions noted in the introduction of the study (Weatherby, Blanch & Jones, 2008).

With reference to the two chosen cases of Vanessa George and Colin Blanchard, and Maxine Carr and Ian Huntley, it is argued that such discourses which relate to the 'production of knowledge through language' not only generate the possibility to 'limit' the 'construction of a topic in a certain way' but can, in effect also, 'enable' it (MacRitchie & Seedat, 2008, p.339). In relation to gender, the common thought amongst many critical discourse analysts is that whilst substantial improvements have been made in the status and position of women in past decades, discursive gender domination does in fact still remain (Van Dijk, 2008). With this, whilst arguably the portrayal of female inferiority within the media sphere has taken on a more subtle and indirect form (Van Dijk, 200), Javed and Mahmood (2011) note that through the use of CDA those 'ideologies or assumptions' attached to gender inequality concealed in 'the words of our written texts or oral speech' can be exposed (p.121).

### Data Collection

The body of data for this study has taken on two formats. Both a selection of newspaper headlines and two relevant documentaries relating to each of the cases have been chosen. With reference to the use of newspaper headlines, due to the wealth of coverage each case received, in order to refine the search only those articles from the tabloid paper *The Sun* will be used for analysis. Known as a 'red top' tabloid, although *The Sun* is marked by its 'sensational' and 'often salacious' content, it has been selected for analysis within this study as it continues to be the most popular daily newspaper within the United Kingdom (McNair, 2009, p.5). Further to this, the headline is often considered the key element in attracting readers ultimately setting the tone for the rest of article and is therefore appropriate for analysis (Ptashchenko, 2008). In contrast to the sensationalistic end of the spectrum, the two documentaries which have been chosen; 'Being Maxine Carr' and 'Vanessa George: Evil close up', it is argued are to provide a more factual based account (Hill, 2007).

Whereas finding the documentaries was relatively easy as for each case there was only one documentary which was of relevance and both were readily available over the internet on either 'YouTube' or '4od' (Channel Four on Demand), the selection process for the newspapers articles was slightly more complex. In order to retrieve a sample of a suitable size the search was focussed specifically on the news coverage during the first two weeks of each of the trial processes. This time period was chosen because as Farr (2001) notes, the extensive media coverage awarded to

newsworthy trials does in fact demonstrate how the notion of 'evil', a current theme throughout the literature surrounding female criminality, is frequently 'dramatized' within the press particularly in the early stages (p.75).

Using 'The Sun's' online database two searches were conducted, the first using the key words 'Maxine Carr and Ian Huntley' and the second using 'Vanessa George and Colin Blanchard'. Each of the searches was then refined by date which in the case of Vanessa George and Colin Blanchard was; 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2009 until 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2009, and in the case of Maxine Carr and Ian Huntley was; 6<sup>th</sup> November 2003 until 20<sup>th</sup> November 2003, ensuring a suitable sample was successfully obtained. From the collection of articles the headlines were then retrieved for analysis. There were no ethical issues to consider as all the information that has been retrieved was done so from the public domain.

### Data Analysis

In order to carry out a comprehensive critical discourse analysis Fairclough's (1992) 'three tiered' approach (see Figure 1) will be applied to the data (as cited in Simpson & Mayr, 2010, p53). This model is comprised of three individual dimensions the first of which is the concept of 'discourse as text' (Blommaert, 2005, p.29). Deriving from the concept of 'Critical Linguistics', this step in the investigation process involves an in depth analysis of the linguistic features present in both the documentaries and the selected newspaper headlines (Simpson & Mayr, 2010, p.50). Often regarded as the 'precursor' to CDA, critical linguistics seeks to 'demonstrate that grammatical and semantic forms' in texts, whether that be written or spoken, are capable of becoming 'ideological instruments' which can be used to 'make meaning' as well as 'categorize and classify' certain individuals (Simpson & Mayr, 2010, p.50).

With this, the 'ideological significance' of grammar, semantics and vocabulary is of particular interest within this study of how female criminality is portrayed in media (Simpson & Mayr, 2010, p.50). Focussing on specific linguistic features, a systematic analysis of the two forms of data will be carried out. Exploration into the choice and pattern of vocabulary will be undertaken, paying attention to the deliberate use words as well as the use of specific linguistic techniques such as metaphors and alliteration (Blommaert, 2005). In addition, close consideration will also be given to both grammatical aspects such as transitivity and modality as well as those features linked to semantics such as the inclusion of emotive and heightened language (Blommaert, 2005). By identifying the use of particular techniques and considering their usage alongside the research already conducted into the existing literature, specific conclusion can be drawn relating directly to the specific research questions outlined in the introduction.

Whilst the linguistic analysis is an important aspect of the study, the method of CDA has been selected as it is a framework which not only attempts to explore the text itself 'but also its production and interpretation' within a wider social context (Simpson & Mayr, 2010, p53). With this the second dimension to Fairclough's (1992) method of discourse analysis is discourse as 'discursive practise' (as cited in Blommaert, 2005, p.29). This refers to the production, circulation, distribution and consumption of both the newspapers and documentaries within this study (Blommaert, 2005). Coupled with this is the third dimension to the model which is the consideration of discourse as 'sociocultural practise' (Simpson & Mayr, 2010, p53). Relating to the regurgitation of particular ideologies throughout time, it is also important alongside the textual analysis to contemplate how the common sense assumptions surrounding women are continually reproduced over time (Blommaert, 2005, p.29). In following this method this study aims to not only highlight the underlying ideologies within media representations of female offenders but also unpack the layered notion of discourse inextricably linked to this process. The following chapter comprises of a primary analysis of the media representations to be critically explored in this research.

## 6. Discussion of Findings

### The Portrayal of Vanessa George and Colin Blanchard within *The Sun's* Headline Coverage of the Trial

As expected a prominent theme which was evident throughout a number of the headlines was George's role as a caregiver. From the list of ten headlines (see Appendix 1) four of them make reference to her occupation as a professional nursery assistant and thus successfully play on the alien concept that a woman could be capable of causing harm to children (Marsh & Melville, 2009). As the location where much of the abuse took place, arguably, reference to Little Ted's nursery is in fact unavoidable in the reporting of this case. However through its use as a form of adjective for example, 'nursery monster' (Coles, 2009), the role of being a professional child carer is used to somewhat define George and in turn present her crimes in a far more sinister light than that of her co-offenders. As noted in the literature historically women have continually been expected to take on those occupational roles which involve caring for children (Duncan, 2010). In this case with much of the emphasis placed on George's employment it appears that as an offender she is constantly judged against the ideals of her gender in way which seeks to not only demonise her but also subtly promote the continuation of expected gender norms within wider society (Weatherby, Blanche & Jones 2008).

Interlinked with the emphasis placed on the notion of George as a primary caregiver, is the frequent mention within the headlines to her status as a 'wife' (Coles, 2009). Rather than referring to George by her name, in the same way she appears to be defined by her employment it seems her role as a wife is also used as marker by which she can be judged. In effect, by highlighting those aspects of her life deemed conventional and acceptable prior to her crimes it appears the concept of transgression and notion of the 'fallen' woman noted in the literature is readily used in *The Sun's* headline portrayal of George (Stevenson, 2008, p.148). Coupled with this, and as predicted this case is symptomatic of the themes featured in Lloyd's (1995) study *Doubly Deviant, Doubly Damned*. As argued by Lloyd (1995) female offenders not only break the law in its legal sense but their behaviour also symbolises the failure to conform to the socially constructed gender norms derived from the patriarchal notion of femininity (as cited in Marsh, Cochcrane & Melville, 2004). As is evident from the headlines, it is apparent that George is responded to far more harshly than her co offender and thus demonstrates the 'doubly damned' concept within wider society (Marsh, Cochcrane & Melville, 2004, p.175).

This imbalanced approach to male and female offending is further illustrated within the data by the obvious over representation of George and her actions in comparison to her co offender Colin Blanchard. Out of the ten headlines chosen as data only one refers to Blanchard specifically and yet even within that he is referred to as a 'businessman' (Soodin, 2008) rather than a 'monster' like George (Coles, 2009). Dismantling this notion even further this could also reflect those inequalities surrounding white collar crime by which little negative attention to those considered 'white-collar workers', instead there tends to be a focus on working class deviance (Surette, 2011, p.58). As can be deduced from the headlines whilst much of the tabloid reporting of this case has focussed on George's deviation from the typical conditions of womanhood, as noted in the literature surrounding discourse there remains subtle indications that even deviant women are portrayed in a way which sees them deferring to men (Van Dijk, 2003). With the inclusion of the past tense verb 'led' in the statement 'businessman led paedo ring', it is very clear who is in charge and that as being part of the 'ring' George is following Blanchard's lead (Soodin, 2008). From this, the notion of male superiority along with other accepted gender stereotypes such as the passive nature of women can be seen to be enforced in a way which is both understated and largely unrecognised by the wider audience.

Further considering the intense focus placed on George's role within this crime an additional linguistic feature which is of significance is the prominent use of personal pronouns and quotation marks within a number of the headlines. Coupled with the use of the personal pronoun 'I'm' to note how George describes herself as 'evil', the inclusion of the possessive personal pronoun 'my' in reference to her crimes in a headline composed of purely speech effectively symbolises George's

admission of guilt (Coles, 2008). As was noted in the literature review, it is argued that female co offenders receive far more media scrutiny than their male counterpart and it appears that this case is no different (Stevenson, 2008). Whilst George did not act alone in her chain of crimes through both the linguistic portrayal of the case and the constant bombardment of images of George it appears that the considerable breach of expectations which she represented did in fact result in her becoming the trademark of the case.

As noted in the literature, in contrast to femininity, hegemonic masculinity is used in a way which seeks to almost provide an excuse for male criminality or at least to down play it (Rowbotham, 2011). Contrasting this, in the instance of the female many argue that due to their biology and the fact that women bear children there is the common sense assumption that there exists an innate maternal sense within all women making the thought of a female harming a child incomprehensible (Brennan & Vandenberg, 2009). Concentrating on the linguistic framework and drawing attention to the frequent use of the metaphor 'monster' to describe George, it appears that her crimes and most significantly the transgression they signify ultimately cast her outside the realm of womanhood. With this, it is argued by Baker (2008) that through the use of such metaphors and the connotations which they entail, the successive dehumanisation of child sex offenders like George within tabloid reporting can instil 'fear and paranoia' amongst audiences symptomatic of the concept of moral panic (p.225).

Continuing with Cohen's (2002) notion of moral panic, the metaphorical use of the word 'ring' in the phrase 'paedo ring' within the tabloid reporting of this case is also of significance (Soodin, 2009). Arguably words like 'ring' or 'network' are frequently used within media reporting of paedophiles as they refer to criminal activity which is both secretive and guarded (Baker, 2008, p.224). The use of this term within this case not only places significant emphasis on the idea that paedophiles similar to George are both 'well-connected and widespread' but also that the female involvement in such behaviour is far greater than it actually is ultimately justifying a more punitive approach towards George. Coinciding with this, a further linguistic feature to note is the use of a colloquial register in utilising terms such as 'paedo' or 'hubby' (Soodin, 2009; Coles, 2009). In many instances colloquial language is often used to help dramatise the events being described, in this instance arguably in presenting the events in a more simplified and common format the sense of threat which the reporting ultimately alludes to is magnified (Baker, 2008). Additionally, the use of such language also creates a sense of proximity and familiarity thus making the reader feel somewhat closer to the story. Considering the impact of public anxiety on criminal justice policy, it is argued that the media coverage of a trial is hugely influential as it effectively steers policy and advocates a far more punitive response (Meloy & Miller, 2009).

#### The Portrayal of Maxine Carr and Ian Huntley within *The Sun's* Headline Coverage of the Trial

As to be expected from the number of headlines in appendix B, as one of Britain's most high profile cases the abduction and murder of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman attracted far more media attention than that of Vanessa George and Colin Blanchard. Taking note from the literature what was surprising however, was the lack of headline attention awarded to Carr by *The Sun* during the trial process. Arguably rightly so, whilst it is obvious from the data above that there is some direct reference to Carr it appears the main focus of the media attention during the trial period was Ian Huntley. Considering this however, it is important to note that just because Carr does not consistently feature as part of the headlines it is not to say that she was not alluded to on a frequent basis within the actual articles themselves.

Focussing initially on those headlines which contain direct reference to Carr, there are a number of linguistic techniques which arguably have been utilised to significantly enhance the small part she did in fact play in the crimes of Huntley. As the place where the girls were murdered, both the bathroom and the bath itself are particularly symbolic within the reporting of this case. Similarly to this the 'car' is also of prominence as it was in fact used by Huntley to transport the bodies to the woods where the girls were eventually buried. With this, two out of the three headlines collected as data which mention

Carr also include one of the two concrete nouns 'bath' or 'car' (Troup, 2003). Coupled with the inclusion of the concrete noun in the verb phrase 'Carr: 'I was in the bath'', similarly in the case of Vanessa George, without any perspective of time or situation the use of speech marks ultimately attribute a false sense of guilt to Carr by directly connecting her to the evidence. The way in which such headlines are decontextualized effectively places Carr in a pivotal role ultimately 'elevating' her offences above those with which she was eventually found guilty of (Jones & Wardle, 2010, p.58).

Although Maxine Carr herself played no part in the murdering of the two girls, as the literature notes much of tabloid coverage of this crime was found to be symptomatic of associating her in such a way that she was perceived to be as implicated as Huntley in the crimes (Jones & Wardle, 2010). Once again looking particularly at the data making specific acknowledgement of Carr, a further linguistic technique used which aids her demonization within the public eye is the use of the intensifier 'so' when referring to her as 'cold' (Troup, 2003). As a comment from a witness, once again the headline lacks any significant context relating to when or where the hitchhiker did in fact see Carr and thus the situation is obscured. As noted in the literature, headlines are frequently used to 'spark curiosity' in potential readers in order to attract their attention (Ptashchenko, 2008, p.7). However in this instance by placing increased emphasis on Carr's perceived negative nature without some perspective readers are almost guided into drawing misleading conclusions about Carr's involvement in the crimes subtly hinting at her transgression from the norms which females within society are expected to adhere to (Simpson & Mayr, 2010).

With this, as can be seen from the list of headlines in appendix B in contrast to the obvious efforts made to implicate Carr to a false extent, as noted in the literature it appears with the exception of one headline little attempt is made to condemn Huntley in the negative way in which Carr was subjected to (Simpson & Mayr, 2010). Considering Huntley's suspicion of guilt, unlike with Carr, not one reference is made to his character or the sinister nature of his suspected behaviour. In contrast to this, attention is instead offered to Huntley's excuses and his assertion of denial. The inclusion of speech is hugely prevalent in this instance for example when referring to information from the trial proceedings in headlines such as "He had three scratches on his face ... he said his dog made them" and 'Huntley 'you think I did it' (Troup, Hughes & Lea, 2003). As mentioned in the literature whereas the thought of female criminality continues to instil shock and complete fear within wider society it appears that the notion of male criminality is still somewhat expected and excused (Lee, 2010).

Continuing with the use of speech within the data to incur a sense authenticity to what is being written, without background information citations from the trial can be misconstrued and misinterpreted. Considering this for example which reference to the 'girl' who had a supposed 'crush' on Huntley, with no contextual information the audience is simply left to guess whether not the article is referring to one of the girls who were murdered or instead a completely different person the impact of which is often false perceptions about those involved. Although arguably subtle, this headline highlights the continued prevalence of preconceived notions surrounding masculinity and femininity. With the use of the past tense 'had' coupled with the informal abstract noun 'crush' in the headline 'Girl 'had crush on Huntley', potential responsibility appears to be somewhat shifted onto the female. Considering those common sense presumptions surrounding masculinity, for example 'dominance' and 'aggression', the inclusion of a female in such a way within this headline arguably reflects a common theme prevalent within the literature surrounding the 'myths of rape' (Cooper-White, 1995, p.84). Such notions argue that women are often guilty of provoking men in some way and as an excuse due to the predetermined nature of masculinity males are unable contain their desires acting instead upon impulse (Cooper-White, 1995, p.84). Having critically discussed media headlines of both cases a primary analysis of documentaries will form the content of the following chapter.

*'Vanessa George: Evil Close Up' and 'Being Maxine Carr' - The Documentary Portrayal of Female Offenders*

Once again using Fairclough's (1992) three tiered approach (in appendix A), as with the headlines both documentaries will be discussed primarily in terms of their linguistic nature. Focussing initially on *Vanessa George: Evil Close Up* (2010), straight away from the title of the documentary the audience is introduced to the familiar concept of George as 'evil', a notion which is not only extremely prevalent in the tabloid reporting of George but also in the literature surrounding the media coverage of the crime. As being predominantly made up of interviews from various individuals somehow involved in the case for example, members of the police, George's daughters and her husband, the use of adjectives is extremely pertinent within this documentary as both the events and George herself are described to the audience. With this, whilst it must be noted that reference is made to both Colin Blanchard and Angela Allen, the second female involved in the crime, as can be deduced from the title of the documentary overwhelming emphasis is placed on George's involvement and her transgression from traditional family life.

From the outset of the documentary considerable stress is placed on the conventional lifestyle George led prior to her involvement with Blanchard. Coupled with the inclusion of old family photographs and images of George as a child, the frequent use of the past tense verb 'was' coupled with adjectives such as 'ordinary' and 'normal' by those members of the family closest to George, effectively symbolises her transition from the traditional 'wife' and 'mother' to 'one of Britain's most reviled paedophiles' (Hanrahan, 2010). With this, little attempt is made to excuse George's actions as references made to both her childhood and adult life mirror those notions linked to that of the 'ideal' woman highlighted in the work of Snider (2004). Through the inclusion of metaphors such as 'bubbly' when referring to George as a child and 'the girl next door' as she moved into womanhood, the documentary appears to offer her no reason other than her 'own sexual deviance' to want to transgress in such a way (Hanrahan, 2010). Arguably as the literature notes, the inclusion of preconceived assumptions surrounding femininity not only acts in a way which incurs a sense of disbelief amongst the audience but in this case the prevalence of gender discourse creates the sense that both George's deviance and successive demonization surpasses that of the others involved (Jones & Wardle, 2010).

As expected from undertaking research into the existing literature surrounding this case, it appears that in order to illustrate the extent of George's transgression a great deal of emphasis is placed on George's rejection of those traditional roles associated with being female. As noted in the literature George's position as primary caregiver both professionally and as a mother to her own two daughters is extremely pertinent in both the tabloid's and the documentary's successive demonization of George (Duncan, 2010). Considering how this is highlighted linguistically both George's position of trust and responsibility is clearly demonstrated through the frequent use of the personal possessive pronoun 'her' in phrases such as 'the children were in her care', both reinforcing the vulnerability of the children and the opportunity for George to exploit them (Hanrahan, 2010). Coupled with this, once again the consistent use of the of the past tense verb 'was' in direct reference to George as a 'mother', 'housewife' or 'nursery worker', effectively symbolises how George's transgression has somewhat removed her from such roles and ultimately othering her from the conventions of womanhood (Hanrahan, 2010). In a similar way to how George appears to be defined by the roles of her gender in the headline coverage of this case, it appears the frequent and continual reference to both her profession as well as her motherly duties within the documentary also seeks to provide these norms as a basis by which she can be judged.

Providing a stark contrast to the portrayal of the 'quintessential family picture' of life prior to George's crimes, as the events are unfolded within the documentary the portrayal of George transpires from 'any ordinary Mum' to a 'vile' and 'evil' paedophile (Hanrahan, 2010). From the initial inclusion of happy family photographs to the official footage of George's police interview the transgression appears to unfold before the audience's eyes. With this, as was found to be apparent in the headline coverage of this case once again whilst Blanchard is mentioned little negative attention is in fact directed precisely at him. Further adding to her demonization through the use of alliteration George is described by her husband during a prison visit as 'cool, calm, and in control' and whilst she

fully acknowledges her crimes she appears to show no obvious signs of guilt or regret (Hanrahan, 2010).

In contrast to the Vanessa George documentary which appears to reproduce many of the themes prevalent within the tabloid coverage of the case, concentrating now on *Being Maxine Carr*, this representation appears to present the far more balanced response expected from the documentary format. Similarly to *Vanessa George: Evil Close up* (2010), *Being Maxine Carr* (2007) is also comprised of those techniques considered typical of the documentary approach. Once again there is a reliance on the inclusion of multiple interviews with those individuals directly involved as well as the use of a covering narrative to effectively guide the audience (Mittell, 2004). In contrast to the other forms of media used as data within this study, rather than focussing on the actual events of the case and what it was that Carr was supposed to have done, *Being Maxine Carr* (2007) instead seeks to highlight the issues and risks associated with the sensationalistic approach when reporting on female offenders. Through the use of the interview technique noted above this documentary presents its audience with the worrying evidence which demonstrates the risks and threats which still remain for Maxine Carr as a result of the demonization she was subjected in the wake of the crimes committed by her partner Ian Huntley.

Providing a complete contrast to how the majority of academic literature perceives media coverage of female offenders, *Being Maxine Carr* (2007) appears to portray both Carr herself, and those wrongly associated with her since her release from prison as victims rather than co-conspirators of Huntley. As noted in the literature, on her release due to such severe public angst towards her, Carr became the only woman who having not committed a violent offence was to be granted indefinite anonymity for fear of her safety in wider society (Jones & Wardle, 2010). By interviewing a number of women across the United Kingdom wrongly accused of being Maxine Carr the documentary successfully substantiates a pattern of lookalike 'witch-hunting' which since news of Carr's release broke in 2004 has become both increasingly common and widespread (Ginnane, 2007). Considering linguistically the use of the metaphor 'witch-hunt' to describe the action of those individuals seeking to unearth Carr's secret identity, the documentary subtly highlights a number of issues relating to the misconceptions and unfair portrayals surrounding Carr within the tabloid coverage of this case.

With reference to its historical purpose, according to Jensen (2007) the concept of the 'witch-hunt' is inextricably linked to the continuation of female inferiority within the patriarchal society. Considering therefore its use within the context of this documentary as well as providing a comparison through which the behaviour towards Carr can be illustrated, it appears the resulting connotations of such activity also seek to highlight the prejudices incurred by Maxine's gender in her portrayal within the tabloid media. A further point to consider with the inclusion of this multi-layered metaphor is the way in which it highlights the common perceptions surrounding Carr amongst the general public that she deserves to be somewhat othered from the realm of femininity. As noted by much of the literature women who transgress the accepted norms attributed to the ideal female are often considered somewhat monster like with references frequently made to their evil nature (Jones & Wardle, 2010). Considering the notion of the 'witch-hunt' therefore its use not only appears to symbolise the arguably unfair perception of Carr held by a vast number of individuals but it also signifies the expulsion of those females who do not appear to conform to gender stereotypes (Ginnane, 2007).

Providing a complete contrast to the other data, whilst acknowledging Carr's behaviour was undoubtedly criminal, as mentioned previously rather than demonising Carr the documentary does in fact appear to regard her more as a victim of Huntley rather than his co-deviant. Within the documentary it becomes apparent that a number of women falsely accused of being Maxine Carr have been subject to a range of abuse. In addition to physical assaults and intimidating behaviour many of those women thought to be the Soham accomplice have been 'forced' out of their homes due to 'mob' like vigilantes refusing to allow anyone thought to be Carr into their communities (Ginnane, 2007). Unlike the previous data where much of the negative language has been directed towards the female offender, within this documentary it appears it is the behaviour of the 'mob' which is perceived as

destructive (Ginnane, 2007). With this, the use of noun 'mob' when referring to such individuals coupled with the verb 'forced' with reference to how the falsely accused women are left with no choice but to move house effectively demonstrates the intense feeling of both disgust and public anxiety surrounding women who are some way involved in the harming of children (Ginnane, 2007).

Whilst the crimes of Huntley can be no way excused through the combined use of language and the inclusion of reconstructions of the abuse suffered by those who have been falsely identified as Carr, rather than encouraging it the documentary successfully highlights a number of the issues which can result from the excessive demonization of women by the tabloid press. With this whilst it can be argued that the documentary does in fact present a far more balanced approach to Carr, similarly to the emphasis placed on George within *Vanessa George: Evil Close up* (2010), it appears once again as a female the focus remains to be on her.

## 7. Conclusion

Considering each of the analyses, it is obvious that whilst not all forms of media can be accused of regurgitating patriarchal perceptions of femininity, inequalities on the basis of gender remain to be extremely prevalent within today's society. Similar to many institutions the media in whichever format, whether it be newspapers or documentaries is a source of revenue (Spence, Alexandra, Quinn & Dunn, 2011). Although arguably not its only objective, as with the majority of organisations it appears that the capacity to make money is high on the list of priorities (Spence et al., 2011). Considering this alongside the portrayal of the female offender it appears that in continuing the 'dominant ideology' approach to reporting by subtly encouraging gender roles and patriarchal stereotypes it enables the female offender to remain a topic of high interest and thus a profit maker within the media sphere (Jewkes, 2011).

With this, whilst the primary aim of conducting this study was to highlight the disparities evident within the reporting of male and female offenders, it is important to note that in no way is it questioning the morality of criminalising those who do break the law. Referring back to the research questions noted in the introduction it appears all but one of the representations, *Being Maxine Carr* (2007), seem to agree with the existing literature surrounding the media portrayal of male and female co-offenders. Arguably from undertaking a CDA there is clear evidence from three of the analyses that through the use of specific linguistic techniques which subtly play on existing ideologies surrounding gender discourse, specific roles and assumptions linked to masculinity and femininity are continually reinforced within society on a daily basis with those who transgress suffering demonisation. With this, whilst the disparities in media portrayals of male and female co-offending appear to be clear within this study it is important to consider the possible limitations associated with the method of CDA.

One of the main issues highlighted with the use of CDA is its potential for bias (Baker, 2001). As noted by Baker (2001), it is extremely 'difficult if not impossible' to be entirely objective and recognising our own views and opinions 'should be a prerequisite for carrying out research' (p.10). Considering this therefore in relation to this study, it highlights the potential within this method to actively seek out those suggestions of female inequality at the risk of disregarding other issues which may be of relevance (Baker, 2008). In order to further this research and possibly present a more balanced approach, carrying out some follow up research which is comprised of a more quantitative perspective is advised (Baker, 2008). Whilst acknowledging the possibility for improvement, through its analysis of male and female co-offending this study has successfully highlighted that despite assumptions of an equal society, issues of gender disparity are still extremely pertinent and continuing effort is needed to address such discrimination.

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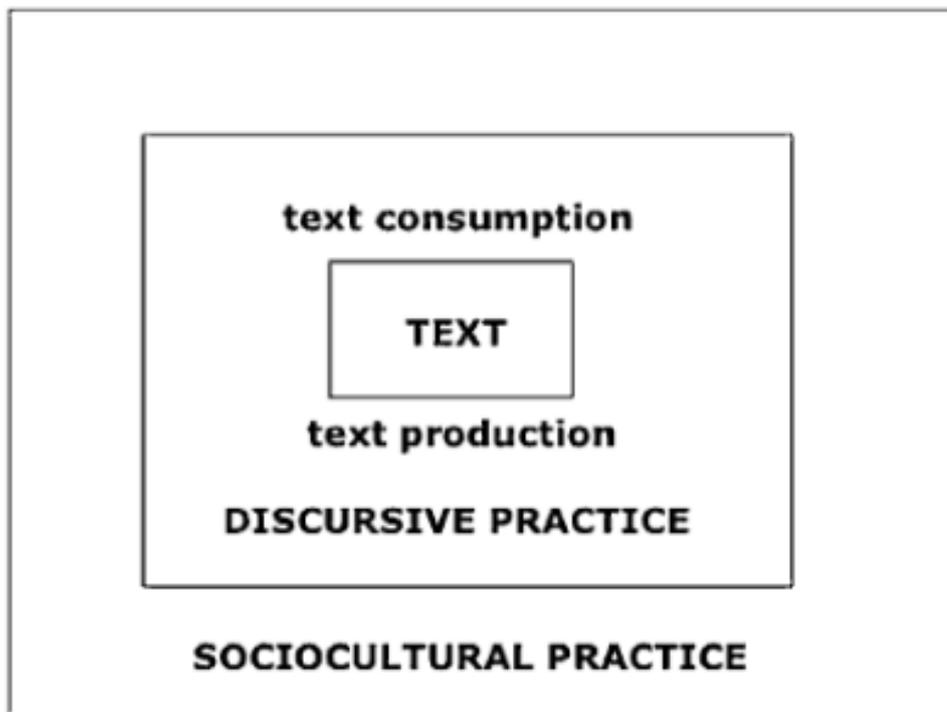
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Appendices

Appendix A

A Framework for Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995, p.59)



## Appendix B

### List of Chosen Headlines regarding Vanessa George and Colin Blanchard

In chronological order starting with the earliest the selected headlines for analysis from *The Sun* are as follows:

- 'Businessman led paedo ring' (Soodin, 2009)
- 'Facebook Trio admit sex abuse' (Coles, 2009)
- 'Judge tells monster: Name your victims' (Coles, 2009)
- 'Find the fourth Facebook monster' (Patrick, 2009)
- 'Torment of abuse nursery mums' (Coles, 2009)
- 'I'll beg evil wife to name abused tots' (Coles, 2009)
- 'Nursery monster was babysitter too' (Coles, 2009)
- 'Nursery monster's hubby in 'suicide' bid' (Coles, 2009)
- 'My crimes are disgusting' (Coles, 2009)
- 'Little Ted monster: I'm vile' (Coles, 2009)

## Appendix C

### List of Chosen Headlines regarding Maxine Carr and Ian Huntley

In chronological order starting with earliest the selected headlines for analysis from *The Sun* are as follows:

‘Huntley ‘sanitised’ car’ (Troup, 2003)

‘Huntley buried them so they’d never be found – QC Richard Latham’ (Troup, Lea & Larcombe, 2003)

‘Fibres on Huntley clothes’ (Troup, Lea & Larcombe, 2003)

‘I hope they get home OK’ Troup, Lea & Larcombe, 2003)

‘Their Man Utd shirts were cut off’ (Troup, Lea & Larcombe, 2003)

‘It is likely they were suffocated’ (Troup, Lea & Larcombe, 2003)

‘Huntley crib card of lies’ (Troup, Lea & Larcombe, 2003)

‘Jury to visit Huntley home’ (Troup, 2003)

‘Only the leaves stirred’ (Troup, 2003)

‘Jurors at girls’ burial site’ (Troup, Lea & Hughes, 2003)

‘QC shows jury Huntley’s home’ (Lea, Hughes & Troup, 2003)

‘Who’s going to call the police, you or me?’ (Troup, Hughes & Lea, 2003)

‘Girl ‘had crush on Huntley’ (Troup, Hughes & Lea, 2003)

‘Huntley ‘did see the girls’ (Troup, 2003)

‘His car had a sweet smell’ (Troup, 2003)

‘Huntley ‘You think I did it’ (Troup, 2003)

‘Tears as Maxine saw car’ (Troup, 2003)

Hitchhiker gives evidence (Troup, 2003)

‘He started to woo media’ (Hughes, 2003)

‘He had three scratches on his face ... he said his dog made them’ (Lea & Troup, 2003)

‘What Huntley told media’ (Hughes, 2003)

‘Carr ‘so cold’ says hiker’ (Troup, 2003)

‘Huntley ‘gave name’ (Hughes, 2003)

‘Carr: I was in the bath’ (Troup, 2003)